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Proc (La)
1681 2 Nov
Ward of



By the Mayor.

To the Alderman of the
Ward of



WHEREAS among the many Enormities that are too frequently practised within this City and the Liberties thereof, I have taken particular notice of the Profanation of the Lords day by the so general Resort to Publick houses, where great part of the day is taken up and wasted in idle or unseasonable Discourses, if not worse imployment. Having also heard frequent complaint made of a strange sort of Women (called Night-walkers) who go about the Streets in the Evening, tempting and inticeing Apprentices and others to Levodness; I have purposed by Gods blessing and the concurrent Endeabours of your Self and the rest of my Brethren the Aldermen, to punish and suppress the same as far as in me lies. And I do earnestly desire and entreat you to take the best care you can for preventing thereof within your Ward: And there being a late Act of Parliament made in the 29th Year of his Majesties Reign, for better Observation of the Lords day, whereby it is Enacted, That all Persons shall on every Lords day apply themselves to the Observation of the same, by exercising themselves thereon, in the Duties of Piety and true Religion, publicly and privately, and that no Person shall do or exercise any business or work of their ordinary Callings on any part of the same day (works of Necessity and Charity excepted) and that every Person of the Age of Fourteen Years or upwards Offending in the Premisses, shall for every such Offence forfeit the Sum of Five shillings to be Levied by Distress by any Constable or the Church-wardens of the Parish upon a Warrant from a Justice of Peace, after the party shall be Convicted by view of such Justice, or the Parties Confession, or the Oaths of one or more Witnesses, and being Prosecuted for the same within Ten days after the Offence Committed. Notwithstanding which Act, and a Precept lately Issued out for the Observation thereof, Wintners and Keepers of Ale-houses and Coffee-houses do take liberty to followe their Callings on that day, and entertain Persons

in their Houses, contrary to the intention of the said Act; That the same therefore may be better Observed hereafter, I earnestly desire You, by Your Beadle or otherwise, to cause warning once more to be given to all Mintners, keepers of Ale-houses, Coffee-houses, and other Publick-houses within Your Ward, that they forbear to harbour Guests in their Houses on that day (other than such Victuallers as Dress and Sell Meat in their Houses for such as cannot otherwise be provided, which is exempted out of the said Act.) And I earnestly recommend to You, that the Constables and the Church-wardens of the several Parishes within Your Ward may have notice given them, and be directed to Inform Me or some other Justice of Peace from time to time of all persons that shall Offend herein, to the end the Penalties aforesaid may be Levied upon them; and their Licenses (if Ale-house or Coffee-house keepers) be taken from them. And I likewise desire You to give a strict Charge to the said Constables that they Carefully and Diligently Observe and Apprehend both all such Night-walkers as aforesaid, and bring them before Me or some other Justice of Peace to be dealt withal and punished according to their deservits; as also to Seize and Apprehend all Vagrants and Common Beggars who are Idle and Useless, and deserve to be punished as the Law hath directed, by Whipping, and then sending them from Parish to Parish to the place where they were Born, if known, else to the place where they last dwelt for a year, to be set to work, or if that be not known, then to the Parish they last past through without punishment. Which the Constable is to do, and the Law enjoyns upon him on pain of forfeiture of Ten shillings for every failer, or he may be Indicted.

And whereas it was given Me in Charge by the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, when I took My Oath at Westminster, That due care might be had of the Watches within this City: I do therefore recommend to You, That the said Constables may be further enjoined to Observe the times prescribed for Setting and Rising of their Watches, and to have constantly their full Numbers of Watchmen, according to the Act of Common Council made in the Mayoralty of Sir John Robinson, on pain to be indicted and prosecuted for every default therein; And that your Beadle do distribute Copies hereof to the several persons concerned. In all which particulars aforesaid, I hope you will be very Careful, being matters where- in the Honour of God, and the Publick Weal of this City are so greatly concerned. Given this 2^d day of November 1681. And in the 33th year of his Majesties Reign.

Wagstaffe.

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